

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

**'Take nuclear weapons
out of hands of US rulers!'**
— PAGE 7

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 81/NO. 32 AUGUST 28, 2017

SWP talks with workers in Va. about racist actions

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In response to recent developments in Charlottesville, Virginia, and furor in the liberal media portraying workers who voted for President Donald Trump as the social base of racist and right-wing activity in the U.S.,

DEEPER INTO THE WORKING CLASS

members of the Socialist Workers Party have been knocking on doors in Charlottesville and around the country to discuss the issues with working people.

SWP member Ned Measel met David Slezak at his home. He is a retired teacher in Charlottesville who now serves meals at a homeless shelter across the street from the park where the Aug. 12 confrontation took place. "I had to listen all day to chants — 'blood and soil,' build the wall, Jews will not replace us, and f-k the fag-

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Coal miner deaths rise as bosses push more speedup

BY TONY LANE

The first seven months of 2017 have seen a dramatic rise in deaths of miners on the job in U.S. coal mines after several years when they had been declining as the industry contracted. By Aug. 5, 11 miners have died, more than the eight killed in 2016.

Many are new miners, or experienced miners working in new coal mines. Five were in their early 30s or 20s. Four had spent less than a year at the mine, one only a few days. A

NO MINER HAS TO DIE — editorial page 9

number were experienced miners, but because of bankruptcies, closures and the downturn in coal production had recently taken jobs in new mines.

The majority of the deaths have been in the eastern coalfields, five in West Virginia alone.

There has been a sharp drop in the number of union-organized mines

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US rulers' 72-year-long drive against the people of Korea



Reuters/Kim Hong-Ji

Practice invasion during U.S.-South Korean annual Foal Eagle war games, April 2, 2017.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The liberals' furor against President Donald Trump, and their determination to drive him from office by any means possible, expanded for a few days into frenzied warnings that a reckless and dangerous president with his hands on the button of Washington's 6,900 nuclear bombs is on the brink of starting a war against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. "Are We All Doomed?"

headlined an Aug. 10 op-ed column

by *New York Times* opinion section editor Bari Weiss, one of many along these lines.

"I don't want to be alarmist, but we're all going to die," talk-show host Stephen Colbert — who has boosted his ratings by curse-laden denunciations of Trump — told his audience Aug. 8.

But the U.S. capitalist rulers are doing the opposite — they're working to achieve their class interests in the

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SWP protests rightist acts, killing in Virginia

Liberals, left smear working class as racist



University of Virginia

Thousands gather Aug. 16 at University of Virginia, Charlottesville, to protest killing of Heather Heyer by white supremacist four days earlier and answer racist marches on campus, in town.

BY SETH GALINSKY

On Aug. 11 a group of some 250 white supremacists and neo-Nazis marched with torches across the University of Virginia campus in Charlottesville, chanting "White lives matter;" "Blood and soil," a slogan used by Adolf Hitler; "You will not replace us" and "Jews will not replace us."

The next day these ultra-rightist thugs joined the "Unite the Right" rally of some 500 people in Charlottesville, ostensibly organized to oppose the removal of a statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee. Orga-

nizers had claimed the action would be the largest such gathering in decades. Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe declared a state of emergency, but rightist thugs and dozens of so-called anti-fascist combatants — both armed — marched and engaged in a series of bloody clashes.

After the cops cancelled the rally, one of the neo-Nazis turned his car into a weapon and drove into a group of counterprotesters, killing Heather Heyer and injuring 19 others.

The Socialist Workers Party op-

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Workers, youth build Cuba 'Che brigade,' youth festival in Russia

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

In less than six weeks, delegations of workers and youth from countries around the world will be heading to Cuba for the Oct. 1-15 "In the Footsteps of Che International Brigade." Others will be attending the 19th World Festival of Youth and Students in Sochi, Russia, Oct. 14-22. Both gatherings will bring together anti-imperialist fighters, supporters of the Cuban Revolution and others who want to learn about struggles of working people around the world and how to strengthen their political work when they return home.

So far more than 60 youth, workers and others from the U.S. have sent in applications, and people continue to sign up for the brigade. Participants will visit places where Che Guevara led battles in the Cuban Revolution and meet with veterans of those struggles. They will talk with leaders of Cuba's mass organizations and do agricultural work.

"I am a worker 100 percent," Alex Calvo, 26, from Far Rockaway, Queens, told Val Johnson, his neighbor, and Róger Calero, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party in New York

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Washington berry pickers protest death of fellow worker

Support grows for workers locked out by Pacific Blue Cross

SWP protests rightist acts

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posed the racist actions and stands with those who oppose their anti-working-class perspective.

The white supremacists were outnumbered at least two to one by counterprotesters. But prominent in the counterprotest were groups that promote the dangerous and false view that racism and fascism can be stopped by small groups confronting the rightists arms in hand.

At the same time, the liberal capitalist media, Democratic and some Republican party politicians, and the middle-class left used the ultrarightist actions and resulting deadly violence to blame President Donald Trump — and especially the workers who elected him — for what happened. They view everything in politics today through the lens of how to get Trump indicted or impeached.

They claimed that the white supremacists are Trump’s “base,” slandering the working class, particularly workers who are Caucasian, as backward, racist and reactionary.

Solidarity Cville, a Charlottesville-based coalition of clergy and radical activists, had demanded the City Council ban the racist rally. The Council cancelled their permit to rally in Emancipation Park where Lee’s statue stands, telling organizers to hold it a mile away.

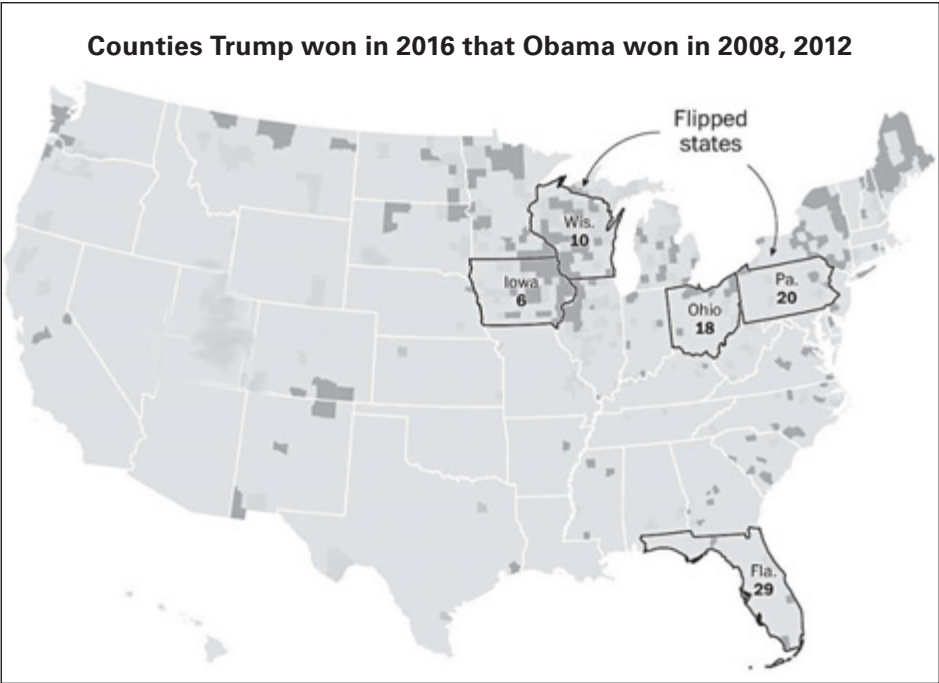
The American Civil Liberties Union challenged the move, saying it was unconstitutional, because it was based on opposition to the ideas of the organizers. The ACLU prevailed.

Solidarity Cville called for a counterprotest. They were joined by middle-class radicals from around the country, as well as others, including antifa, short for anti-fascist groups; Refuse Fascism!; and various anarchist groupings that advocated physical attacks to shut down or break up the rightist action.

There were groups on both sides of the street actions armed with semiautomatic weapons, pistols, chemical spray and other armaments.

By 10:30 a.m., fights were taking place. Then a couple dozen counterprotesters formed a line, using a large wooden barricade to try and block a group of white supremacists armed with shields and wooden clubs who were approaching the park. A melee began as the racists were met by organized and similarly armed groups.

Responding to criticism of police inaction, Gov. McAuliffe, a Democrat, said that protesters “had better equipment than our State Police.”



Liberals and middle-class left groups claim Trump is president because his “base” is racist, reactionary workers. In fact, Trump won workers’ votes in over 200 counties — mostly Caucasian — that voted for Obama in 2008 and 2012, seeking change from capitalism’s carnage.

Counterprotesters chanted “Go the f--k home!” the rightists shouted back “Go the f--k back to Africa.”

University of Virginia student Isabella Ciambotti was one of the counterprotesters. “What I saw on Market Street didn’t feel like resistance,” she wrote in the *New York Times*. “It felt like every single person letting out his

or her own well of fear and frustration on the crowd.”

Ciambotti says she watched “when a counterprotester ripped a newspaper stand off the sidewalk and threw it at alt-right protesters.”

One assault particularly disturbed her. “A much older man, also with the

Continued on page 9

Hundreds rally in Quebec to defend refugees

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

MONTREAL — Chanting “Refugees welcome,” hundreds of people rallied at the Olympic Stadium here Aug. 6 to show their support for migrants arriving from the U.S. being housed here and in other parts of the province.

“We are here with them, to support them and to help them establish themselves,” organizer Serge Bouchereau told the crowd through a megaphone.

The action was called by Solidarity Across Borders and the Non-Status Haitian Action Committee.

More than 70 percent of recent arrivals are originally from Haiti. They fear deportation from the U.S. because of Washington’s announcement in May that Haitians’ temporary protected status will be removed in January 2018. Haitians got this status in 2010 after an earthquake devastated their country.

Ottawa also granted Haitians special status, but last summer the Canadian government rescinded it. Since March 2017 the Canada Border Services Agency has deported 296 Haitians.

Philippe Tessier, Communist League candidate for mayor of Montreal, joined the rally. “I call for amnesty for all undocumented workers in Canada, and call for immediate access to decent housing, medical care, education and the right to work for those arriving here,” he told fellow

participants.

Tessier and CL campaign supporters went door to door in a working-class neighborhood close to the stadium and a few days later in Hemmingford, near the border, to discuss and debate the League’s call for amnesty to help unite working people. They found interest in the League’s program, selling two copies of *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?* — one each in French and Spanish, and a copy of the *Militant*. They collected several signatures to put Tessier on the November ballot.

According to Quebec Minister of Immigration Kathleen Weil, the number crossing from New York into Quebec has tripled to 150 a day this month. In addition to the 600 people housed in Olympic Stadium, others are staying at the YMCA, university residences in Montreal, a vacant hospital and school. The army started erecting tents near the border Aug. 9.

‘Militant’ printing schedule

This is a two-week issue. *Militant* no. 33 will be mailed out August 31.

THE MILITANT

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Staff Sgt. John Wilkes/Ohio National Guard
One-week-long government-run free health clinic in Hayesville, N.C., Aug. 4.

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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant*’s views. These are expressed in editorials.

SWP discusses racist actions

Continued from front page
gots,” he said, referring to the ultra-rightists. “I saw some of them had machine guns.” He showed Measel some photos of armed white supremacists he took with his phone.

Slezak wanted to discuss broader politics in the U.S. today. “I’m a socialist. What do you think of Bernie Sanders?” he asked. “Sanders doesn’t present a course forward for the working class. He is seeking to take over the Democratic Party and give it a more radical reform program in hopes of shoring up the capitalist system,” said Measel. “Working people need to build their own party, a party like the SWP, that can lead workers and their allies in struggle against the ravages of the capitalist crisis today and chart a course to take political power out of the hands of the capitalist class. That’s what the Cuban people did in their revolution, something working people here need to emulate.”

Variety of opinions about statue

People had a variety of opinions about the statue of Confederate General Robert E. Lee in downtown Charlottesville that the City Council wants to take down. “The statue is historical and it’s never bothered anyone, so it doesn’t need to come down,” Rae Dawn, 15, told Measel on her doorstep. This view was shared by a number of others, both Blacks and Caucasians, talked to by SWP members.

Unlike in Charleston, South Carolina, where 50,000 people marched in 2000 demanding the Confederate battle flag be taken down — leading to its removal from the state Capitol building — or where thousands gathered in July 2015 to see that same flag entirely removed from the Capitol grounds after white supremacist Dylann Roof shot and killed nine African-American worshippers at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, there is no broad movement of workers in the streets of Charlottesville demanding the statue of Lee be removed.

In Charleston, West Virginia, about 150 people protested at the state Capitol Aug. 13 demanding the removal of a statue of Confederate Gen. Stonewall Jackson. A handful of members of the Sons of Confederate Veterans counter-protested, saying the statue was a historical site. The next day Socialist Workers Party members and supporters from the Washington, D.C., area knocked on doors in Huntington, West Virginia, where President Donald Trump recently held a rally attended by thousands of working people.

Most of the workers they met, both Caucasian and Black, said that they had voted for Trump.

“People say that this is a part of history, but it’s about bad history,” said Shawn Tackett, 42, an unemployed construction worker, who was remodeling his home. “The Civil War was fought to abolish slavery. The reasons they are for fighting for the monuments are wrong.”

Team members showed him *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, which describes Radical Reconstruction following the Civil War, the Black-led working-class movement that overthrew Jim Crow segregation in the 1960s and the significance of the 2000 protests against the Confederate battle flag in Charleston.

“That’s why struggles over state governments displaying the Confederate battle flag, or over statues or holidays in tribute to political or military leaders of the slaveholders’ rebellion, continue to have weight in the class struggle many decades — indeed almost a century and a half — after it was routed in a bloody civil war,” Barnes writes in the *Workers Power* book.

SWP members and supporters are stepping up efforts to meet with workers on their doorsteps and introduce them to *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?* and *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record*, also by Barnes, and *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters, and to increase the circulation of the *Militant*.

“I’ve been to four funerals in the last week and a half,” said Tackett, talking about the opioid epidemic in West Virginia, where the drug overdose death rate is the highest in the country.

“We can solve it,” said SWP member Glova Scott. “Drug use and crime decline when workers go into struggle against the economic, social and moral disaster wrought by capitalism, that’s what happened during the big battles that overthrew Jim Crow. It’s through these kinds of struggles that working people will gain the strength and self-confidence to take political power and finally get rid of this dog-eat-dog capitalist system.”

In the Beacon Hill neighborhood of Seattle, Mary Martin, SWP candidate for Seattle mayor, and SWP member Edwin Fruit met Lahtavia Mitchell, 26, who works as a housekeeper. “It’s sad that people can feel totally comfortable expressing hatred and prejudice for others,” she said. “On the other hand I see people feeling totally able to express their anti-racist stance too.”

“The historic gains of the powerful movement that overthrew Jim Crow cannot be turned back,” Martin said. “It still reverberates today. There is more fraternization among workers who are Black and workers who are Caucasian than ever before. The working class is less racist than ever before in U.S. history.” Mitchell got a *Militant* subscription to follow politics and the activities of the SWP.

SWP members in New York put all

Australia: Communist League launches campaign, hall



Militant/Ron Poulsen

SYDNEY, Australia — “Our new campaign headquarters puts us more in the heart of working-class districts of western Sydney. We’ve been campaigning door to door in neighborhoods here and are getting a good response,” said Joanne Kuniansky at the open house for the Communist League hall in Granville, Aug. 12. The event also celebrated Kuniansky getting on the ballot as Communist League candidate for Canterbury-Bankstown council in the Sept. 9 local elections.

Kuniansky, right, and a supporter of the League went to a six-month-old homeless encampment, complete with 24-hour kitchen, in the financial heart of the city Aug. 10 to show solidarity. That night the state government rushed through a law to enable cops to move the homeless workers out of the area — and out of the public eye.

“The tent campsite highlighted the growing carnage and social crisis of capitalism, for which neither the Liberal nor Labor parties have any solutions,” the communist candidate said. “Explaining this crisis — and how it poses the need to build a revolutionary working-class party like the Communist League to lead our class to take political power — is the heart of the discussions we have as we go door-knocking in workers’ neighborhoods,” she said.

— RON POULSEN

other activities aside Aug. 14 to join in a number of actions in the area to protest the killing of Heather Heyer by a white supremacist in Charlottesville and discuss the road forward for the working class.

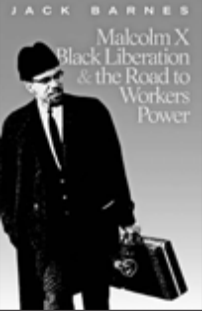
SWP leader Róger Calero said he met Fredy, a construction worker who came to Trump Tower to “see what was happening with the demonstrations.” After an hour of discussion on a wide variety of political questions, Calero told the *Militant*, Fredy got a copy of the paper. He said he had a friend he thought would also like to talk with the SWP. “We plan for the three of us to get together and talk more,” Calero said.

SWP member Lea Sherman took part in a rally of some 125 people outside the Church of the Mediator in the Bronx that evening. They had an open speakers platform so she addressed the crowd. “There is much carnage on the working class,” she said, “including unemployment, the opioid crisis, no health care, cop violence, never ending wars. Neither the Democrats nor Republicans have any solutions. The road forward is the working class taking power. That is the road of the Cuban Revolution.”

Arlene Rubinstein and Ned Measel from Washington, D.C., and Edwin Fruit from Seattle contributed to this article.

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Frame-up trial against Quebec rail workers to begin Sept. 11

BY JOHN STEELE

Locomotive engineer Tom Harding and train dispatcher Richard Labrie, members of United Steelworkers Local 1976, go on trial Sept. 11 on frame-up charges stemming from the July 6, 2013, derailment and explosion of a Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway oil train in downtown Lac-Mégantic that killed 47 people.

The two workers face 47 counts of criminal negligence causing death, as does company operations manager Jean Demaitre. Each could face up to life in prison. The trial will take place in Sherbrooke, Quebec, about an hour and a half from Lac-Mégantic.

The much-delayed trial opens five weeks after the derailment of a massive 178-car, two-mile-long CSX freight train in Hyndman, Pennsylvania, where 1,000 people had to be evacuated as molten sulfur, liquefied petroleum gas and propane burned for three days.

“The Aug. 2 CSX Hyndman derailment reminds the people here that rail industry leaders, concerned about quick profits for their shareholders, have forgotten the lessons of Lac-Mégantic,” Robert Bellefleur, spokesperson for the Citizens and Groups Coalition for Rail Safety, told the *Militant* Aug. 11. “It’s the same scenario, a long train with a small crew. Are they once again going to blame the rail workers who were working under unacceptable conditions?”

The coalition has been fighting to force Ottawa to build a rail bypass around the town. Bellefleur and others from Lac-Mégantic have attended court hearings in support of Harding and Labrie.

Harding the one person ‘crew’

On that night over four years ago, Harding was the only worker on the 72-car train carrying highly explosive crude oil from the North Dakota shale oil fields. The one-person “crew” was a cost-cutting measure requested by Montreal, Maine and Atlantic bosses to save money and approved by the federal government’s Transport Canada.

Harding parked the train as per company rules at the village of Nantes on a grade seven miles from Lac-Mégantic. He set handbrakes on a number of cars, ensured that the lead engine was running to power the air brakes, then went to a hotel in the town of 6,000 to get some sleep after his 12-hour shift.

Under company rules he was forbidden to throw a switch to activate the additional automatic air-brake system, which would have held the train in place if the other brakes failed. This rule was also designed to cut costs, since it would

have “lost” time — and money — while the brake system replenished air pressure in the morning.

When this fact was revealed in a front-page article — “Backup Brake Could Have Averted Disaster” — in the *Globe and Mail*, Canada’s English-language daily, on March 7, 2016, it exposed the bosses’ responsibility for the disaster.

During the night a fire broke out on the running engine due to faulty, company maintenance. Local volunteer firefighters came and put it out. They shut down the engine, and, unwittingly, the brake air pressure system.

When Harding was roused and told about the fire he volunteered to go back to the train and make sure everything was OK. He was told by company officials that it was being taken care of and to go back to sleep. The track manager had been dispatched who knew nothing about locomotives.

A couple of hours later the air brakes bled out and the train began to roll, gathering speed until it hit a curve a few yards from the Musi-Café, which was packed with Saturday night party-goers. Most of the tanker cars derailed, leaked and exploded into a massive fireball that burned for days. The majority of the 47 residents killed were in the café. The downtown core was gutted, the soil, lake and river around the town contaminated.

Harding considered a hero

Awakened again, this time by the explosion, Harding rushed towards the fireball, got protective clothing from firefighters and helped move a number of tanker cars that hadn’t yet exploded.



Reuters/Mathieu Belanger

Framed-up locomotive engineer Tom Harding, center, and dispatcher Richard Labrie, partially hidden, members of United Steelworkers, and rail company official Jean Demaitre, escorted to court by cops in Lac-Mégantic, May 13, 2014, after criminal negligence charges were filed.

Many people in the town consider him a hero. Most think the wrong people have been charged and hold Ottawa and Montreal, Maine and Atlantic bosses responsible.

The tracks through the town were quickly replaced. Trains, now owned by the Central, Maine and Quebec Railway, which replaced the now bankrupt and dissolved Montreal, Maine and Atlantic, continue to run through the downtown at all hours. While they no longer carry highly combustible shale oil, they do transport dangerous cargo like propane, sulfuric acid and sodium chlorate. The curvature of the rebuilt tracks is sharper now than it was four years ago.

“The prosecution, whose motives have been less than honorable, doesn’t have a case against Labrie and Demaitre,” Thomas Walsh, Harding’s lawyer,

told the *Militant* July 12. “They hope the jury will focus on Harding as the last person who had contact with the train. But they don’t have a case against Harding either.

“I think people generally understand, based on the facts that have become known, what happened was preordained,” he said. “Harding is a victim of company neglect and circumstances over which he had no control.”

You can come and sit in on the trial in solidarity with the rail workers, or send a message in support of Harding and Labrie to USW Local 1976 / Section locale 1976, 2360 De Lasalle, Suite 202, Montreal, QC Canada H1V 2L1, with copies to Thomas Walsh, 165 Rue Wellington N., Suite 310, Sherbrooke, QC Canada J1H 5B9. E-mail: thomaswalsh@hotmail.com.

Florida prison censors article on prison censorship

BY SETH GALINSKY

On July 6 the Florida prisons system’s Literature Review Committee overturned two decisions by local prison authorities barring copies of the *Militant* to subscribers behind bars that reported on the socialist paper’s fight against prison censorship. Then on July 25 authorities at Florida State Prison in Raiford impounded the July 17 issue, saying it “presents a threat to the security, good order, or discipline of the correctional system or the safety of any person.”

What was the article that so threatened their institution? “Defend ‘Militant’ Against Florida Prison Censorship,” the headline read.

The article reported how the American Civil Liberties Union of Florida, Pen America and Stop Prison Abuse Now had sent statements protesting the previous impoundments.

“Rejection of these issues violates the free speech rights of both the author and the inmate recipients,” wrote Benjamin Stevenson in a letter from the ACLU quoted in the article. “This amounts to censorship of reports of censorship that could not possibly present a concrete risk to the safe operations of the prison.”

And so does the latest impoundment.

The *Militant* currently has 40 subscribers in prisons across Florida. The prisoner who informed the paper about this new censorship had helped the *Militant* overturn the previous im-

poundments, filing a successful grievance. It said that the *Militant* “has been allowed for years now” and “is purely political, insightful, and educative for those inmates with different ideals and who enjoy such reading.”

“I’ve got the right to have my own ideals and the Constitution itself gives me the right to freedom of thought,” he told prison authorities, “and to deny me this *Militant* publication is similar to dictating to us what we should read and believe.”

Despite winning the grievance and the *Militant* winning its challenge, the prisoner’s July 28th letter to the paper says the prison has not returned that issue.

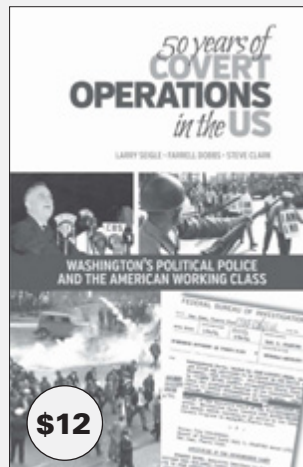
The *Militant*’s lawyer, David Goldstein, wrote to the Literature Review Committee Aug. 9, noting that the committee had just overturned the impoundment of two issues of the paper for similar articles against censorship. Even though the *Militant* has not yet received official notice from the prison that the July 17 issue has been impounded, he said he plans to file an appeal if the seizure is not rescinded.

“Workers behind bars remain part of the working class, discussing and debating how we can come together to politically defend ourselves from the bosses, their government, their cops and courts,” said John Studer, editor of the *Militant*. “The *Militant* will not stop defending both our right to get our ideas into the hands of our subscribers and their right to read litera-

ture of their choosing.”

Send statements of support and contributions to support the fight against prison censorship to the *Militant*, 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Recommended reading



The 15-year campaign of the Socialist Workers Party to expose spying by the FBI and other cop agencies targeting working-class organizations and opponents of gov’t policies. Traces the origins of bipartisan efforts to expand presidential powers and build the “national security” state essential to maintaining capitalist rule. Includes “Imperialist War and the Working Class” by Farrell Dobbs.

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—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Wash. berry pickers protest death of fellow worker

SUMAS, Washington — When Honesto Silva Ibarra, a berry picker at Sarbanand Farms near here, told the company that his head hurt and he felt ill, he was told to get back to work. The next day, Aug. 3, he felt so sick that he left work and tried to get a plane ticket back to his home country of Mexico. But he found out that the labor contractor hadn't renewed his temporary work visa so he couldn't purchase one. As his condition deteriorated, he was taken to a hospital 90 miles away in Seattle, where he fell into a coma and died a few days later.

The morning after he entered the hospital a group of workers at the farm decided not to work that day out of concern over Ibarra's treatment and conditions at the farm.

"The workers only wanted information about his condition. They wanted to know what was being done to help. The company's response was to fire them," Ramón Torres, president of the farm-workers union, Familias Unidas por la Justicia [Families United for Justice], told the *Militant*. Sixty workers were fired and 22 others decided to leave with them.

The union organized a protest at the farm owners' offices Aug. 8, demanding accountability for Ibarra's death and payment of wages owed to the workers.

In an outpouring of solidarity, a local couple offered their back yard as a place where the fired workers could stay, which is now filled with tents. Others brought food, water, refrigerators, generators, and bedding.

Torres invited Socialist Workers Party members to come to the camp to get the workers' story into the *Militant*.

"People are getting nosebleeds and ear infections," said fired worker Miguel Ramirez Salazar. "You work all day in wet shoes. There are chemicals in the water, but they tell us there are none."

"We have taken five of the workers to the hospital. Three have paralysis of the face. We have a compañero with infected toes, the doctor told him in one more day the infection would have spread to the bone," Torres said. "When that happens they would have to amputate." The fight has gotten widespread coverage in area press, radio and TV news.

"They just use us as cheap labor and don't care if we are sick or if we die," said Torres. "The purpose of the union is to defend farmworkers. We say, 'we aren't going to permit this abuse. Contract workers or whoever, we will fight for them.'"

— Edwin Fruit

Support grows for workers locked out by Pacific Blue Cross

BURNABY, British Columbia — Support is growing here for 600 Pacific Blue Cross workers who have been locked out since July 7. The workers, members of Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 1816, are protesting company attacks on health care coverage, wages, pensions and lengthening of the contract. Blue Cross is a private health insurance company.

Some 125 strikers and supporters, including members of the Hospital Employees Union, Steelworkers and several CUPE locals, rallied on the picket line here Aug. 9.

"What keeps us going is that we

are in this together and the incredible support," locked-out worker Momena Kayode, who has worked at Blue Cross for 10 years, told the crowd. "This is the first time I learned what unity is."

The previous day 10 Hospital Employees Union members from Vancouver General Hospital came to the picket line. Food service worker Catalina Samson told the *Militant* that when the hospital contracted out their work in 2004, her wage went from \$18.10 to \$10.15 an hour and she lost all her benefits, pension and sick leave. Gemma DeJesus, who also works at Vancouver General Hospital, added, "We've gone through this. We know how it is."

— Joe Young



Militant/Dan Grant

Members of Canadian Union of Public Employees locked out by Pacific Blue Cross are joined by supporters at rally in Burnaby, British Columbia, Aug. 9. "We are in this together with incredible support," locked-out worker Momena Kayode, at microphone, tells rally participants.

Coal miner deaths rise as bosses push speedup

Continued from front page

in the last couple decades, as the mine bosses in search of profits have pushed hard for speedup and corner-cutting on safety.

Ray Hatfield Jr., a 23-year veteran in the mines, was six months into his latest job when he was crushed to death in a Kentucky mine Jan. 26. The Mine Safety and Health Administration said his death was preventable, citing a number of safety violations at the mine.

"Hatfield was working in a death-trap, with not even minimal safety requirements being met," Tony Oppegard, an area attorney who represents mining families, told the press. "This is what a lot of Appalachian coal miners have to put up with."

Patricia Silvey, the deputy assistant secretary of labor, said MSHA will respond by organizing visits to mines, reviewing training programs and observing young miners on the job.

The United Mine Workers of America said the initiative falls far short of what is needed, noting federal inspectors who conduct such training visits are barred from punishing the mine if they spot safety violations.

"To take away the inspector's right to issue a violation takes away the one and only enforcement power the inspector and the agency has," union

President Cecil Roberts wrote in a recent letter to MSHA. The union also pointed out that at union mines, a union representative would not be required to accompany inspectors on these visits.

"When you let up on enforcement and you want to coddle operators and ask them to comply and assist them with complying, instead of making them comply," UMWA spokesman Phil Smith told the media, "you will inevitably see an increase in bad accidents, bad injuries and fatalities."

"To my way of thinking, new miners are not getting enough experience; they're just getting turned loose. There should be more on-the-job training," Wilson Maxwell, president of UMWA Local 8982 at the preparation plant for the Oak Grove mine in Alabama, told the *Militant* in a phone interview. In June Marius Shepherd, a 32-year-old miner involved in preshift examinations there, was killed in a train haulage accident underground. "He had only been at the mine a short period of months, and didn't have any experience on the haulage," Maxwell said.

When he started in the mines, Maxwell explained, "I didn't run a piece of equipment for a year. Nowadays, with a few days of experience, they have workers running equipment." He criticized MSHA's plans for mine visits

that bar inspectors from writing up violations, saying, "If there is a danger, something should be done."

The rise in coal mine deaths occurs as coal production is increasing for the first time in years. E&E News, which describes itself as an organ for "energy and environment professionals," wrote that the uptick in coal production "has led to a handful of new mine openings and more shifts at existing mines. But the downturn saw many ex-miners leave for new jobs or new towns, with only red hats [inexperienced miners] to take their place."

Coal production is up 15 percent in the first six months of 2017 after record low production last year. Prices for natural gas — the main competitor of coal for power plants — are up and demand for export coal in China has increased. This has led to new hiring.

A year ago many of the big coal producers were in bankruptcy. Since then, the two top companies, Peabody Energy and Arch Coal, have restructured and are trading on the stock exchange again.

And they're taking steps to boost profitability at the expense of miners' life and limb. "High-cost coal mines are being shuttered while operations are moved to low-cost regions," Wall Street investment firm Zacks.com said.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



August 28, 1992

The August 3-4 general strike in South Africa, which involved millions of workers, shows the advance of a genuine social revolution in South Africa.

The strike and march showed the growing strength and organization of the African National Congress as the leader of the democratic revolution.

The ANC speaks in the interests of the toilers.

Working people worldwide should solidarize with the demands being put forward by the ANC. Their call for the immediate formation of an interim government and the election of a constituent assembly is the way forward toward the goal of a democratic, nonracial, South Africa.



September 4, 1967

Since Aug. 10, Washington has undertaken a major new escalation of the war in North Vietnam. This includes bombing targets only a few miles and even fewer seconds flying time from the Chinese border and bombing directly in the center of Hanoi forcing a massive civilian exodus.

The new escalation increases the danger of war with China. It is occurring precisely when more and more American people are becoming disillusioned and fed up with the war.

This significant shift in popular opinion offers the antiwar movement an excellent opportunity to strike a major blow at Washington's aggression in Vietnam by building the Oct. 21 National Mobilization in Washington.



August 29, 1942

The fraud of President Roosevelt's "equal sacrifice" program was revealed this week when Leon Henderson, OPA [Office of Price Administration] head, estimated that corporations this year would reap 20 billion dollars worth of profits.

According to Henderson's estimates, profits in the first year of United States participation in the war would be four times as much as in 1939 and double the profits of 1940. The Treasury Department estimates that corporations will amass 17 billions in profits this year.

By either of these figures big business is getting fat on the war.

The trend of wartime economy is clear: more profits for the bosses, a clamp on wages for the workers.

US rulers' drive against Korea

Continued from front page

region *without* military action on the Korean Peninsula. President Trump's threats of unleashing "fire and fury" are meant to convey the message that the U.S. rulers are serious in demanding the Kim Jong-Un government in the North agree to back off development of its long-range missile and nuclear weapons program.

It's Washington's imperialist aggression that's responsible for the more than 70-year division of Korea. When Korean workers and farmers rose up in their millions to take advantage of Tokyo's defeat in World War II to advance their fight for independence, Washington intervened, leading to a murderous war that ended in a stalemate. It has maintained tens of thousands of troops in South Korea since and imposed the division of the Korean people.

The Trump administration is moving to step up the pressure on Pyongyang. Convinced the previous three U.S. administrations didn't act with enough resolve, it is seeking a way to collaborate effectively with Beijing and to tighten the screws to gain results.

"The object of our peaceful pressure campaign is the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula," Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* Aug. 13. "The U.S. has no interest in regime change or accelerated reunification of Korea."

"If China wishes to play a more active role in securing regional peace and stability," the two administration officials say, "it must take the decision to exercise its diplomatic and economic leverage over North Korea."

Spokespeople for both the left and right of bourgeois politics have no other course.

"The Obama administration's response" to Pyongyang's advances in nuclear and missile development "was to do — well, not much of anything, under the euphemism of 'strategic patience,'" the liberal *Washington Post* editorialized Aug. 11. Their prescription? "Assemble a coalition of nations to impose economic sanctions sufficiently punitive and targeted at the regime that Mr. Kim decides he would be better off making a deal."

In an Aug. 12 op-ed column in the *Wall Street Journal*, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger argues for the same. "For more than 30 years, the world's response to North Korea's nuclear program has combined condemnation with procrastination," he writes.

"An understanding between Washington and Beijing is the essential prerequisite for the denuclearization of Korea," he says. Such an alliance, with the backing of Tokyo and Seoul would apply "maximum pressure" on Pyongyang while also offering it "workable guarantees" that their government would not be overthrown, he says.

Stiff sanctions on North Korea

All these pundits hail the Trump administration's success in hammering together a unanimous vote — including Beijing and Moscow — in the United Nations Security Council Aug. 5 imposing the stiffest sanctions yet on North Korea. The sanctions — the eighth over the past decade — ban the import of coal, iron, lead and sea-

food from the DPRK and prohibit any increase in the number of workers it sends abroad. The move, like previous restrictions, hits working people the hardest. Estimates are the sanctions will reduce the country's exports by one-third.

Kim responded to President Trump's comments with threats to launch ballistic missiles at the American territory of Guam, some 2,100 miles away. Guam, seized from Spain by Washington in 1898, is home of one of Washington's sizable and growing military bases in the Pacific, keys to the U.S. rulers' efforts to defend their access to trade routes and markets in Asia.

With a population of 162,000, residents of the U.S. colony have been involved in their own fight against U.S. military occupation. Dubbed Guamanians by the U.S. Navy after World War II, the native Chamorro people were not given full citizenship rights until 1950. They are allowed to vote for the U.S. president, but it isn't counted, since they are barred from sending delegates to the Electoral College.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in called for military talks with Pyongyang, the first in three years. Seoul, a city of 10 million people is just 35 miles south of the border. The highly fortified Democratic People's Republic of Korea army has 10,000 artillery pieces capable of rapidly hitting that city and U.S. troop bases further south.

Giving added weight to Washington's threats if Pyongyang refuses to discuss denuclearization, Beijing said that if the DPRK launches missiles near a U.S. territory and the U.S. retaliates, "China will stay neutral," according to the *Global Times* newspaper. But, it added, if the U.S. strikes first and tries to overthrow the North Korean regime, "China will prevent them from doing so."

"Beyond the bluster, the Trump administration has been quietly engaged in back channel diplomacy with North Korea for several months," reported The Associated Press Aug. 11.

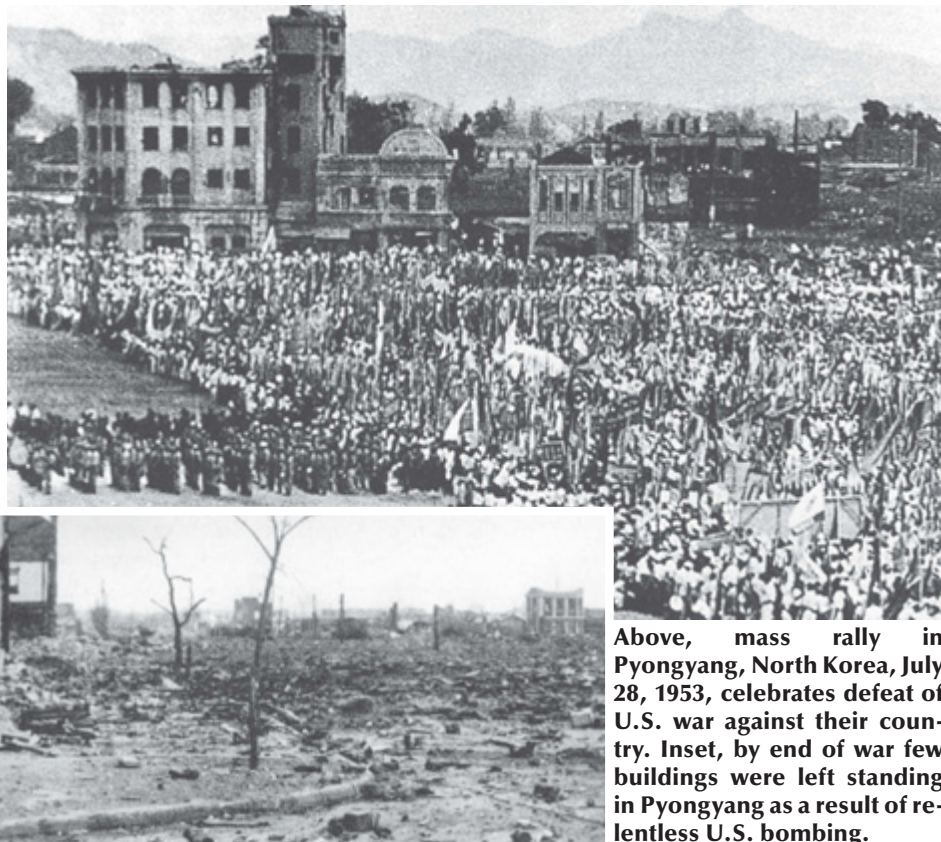
Build Che brigade to Cuba, youth festival in Sochi

Continued from front page

Aug. 15. "I am interested in seeing what a group of people can do when they have mankind in their best interest." He was referring to the Cuban people's internationalist contributions, including providing free treatment in Cuba for more than 20,000 victims of the Chernobyl nuclear plant explosion and the Ebola epidemic in West Africa. Calvo filled out his application for the brigade and sent \$200 toward travel expenses.

Joel Britton, a member of the SWP from Oakland, California, who is going on the brigade, told the *Militant* about the interest in the Cuban Revolution he and other party members found when they went to Hollister, California, in June to express solidarity with members of the Teamsters union at San Benito Foods on strike there.

"When they first heard about it, two of the leaders of the militant cannery workers' strike were attracted to the idea of the brigade," he said. The strikers kept up effective picket



Above, mass rally in Pyongyang, North Korea, July 28, 1953, celebrates defeat of U.S. war against their country. Inset, by end of war few buildings were left standing in Pyongyang as a result of relentless U.S. bombing.

The DPRK has about 10 nuclear warheads, according to the Arms Control Association. In a program begun under the Obama administration in 2010, Washington is upgrading its nuclear arsenal to the tune of \$1 trillion.

Decades of U.S. aggression

Following World War II Washington, landed troops to prevent the Korean workers and farmers from taking power and, with agreement of the Stalinist regime in Moscow, dividing the country in two.

In May 1948 Washington imposed the Syngman Rhee dictatorship, which together with the U.S. occupation army crushed the rebellion in the south. North of Korea's 38th parallel, workers and peasants were able to take power and organized a sweeping agrarian reform, expropriated landlords and capitalists and carried out other measures. In September 1948, the DPRK was established in Pyongyang.

War broke out on June 25, 1950, as the U.S. rulers backed the Rhee regime's effort to reimpose the dictatorship of capital in the North. Over the next three years some 2 million U.S. soldiers and more than 160,000 troops

from 15 other countries under the banner of the U.N. fought in Korea. When U.S. forces reached the Chinese border, Beijing sent 260,000 troops to aid Korean fighters in driving the invasion back.

More than 4 million people were killed in the U.S.-organized war, including at least 2 million civilians. U.S. bombers leveled Pyongyang and scores of other cities, towns and villages. The Truman administration threatened to use nuclear weapons.

The war ended with an armistice — the first time U.S. imperialism failed to win a war. Ever since, Washington has maintained an official state of war on the peninsula, refusing to sign a peace treaty with the DPRK.

The U.S. military maintains 28,500 troops in South Korea and conducts provocative joint military exercises with Seoul deploying tens of thousand of troops at least twice a year.

The latest, Ulchi-Freedom Guardian, is planned for Aug. 21-31. Like the last exercise, this one is scheduled to include practice "decapitations" raids, simulating incursions into the North to assassinate Kim Jong-un and other government leaders

lines for a week, won solidarity from workers in the area and won a \$1-an-hour wage increase.

"We explained how working people took power in Cuba nearly 60 years ago and remain in power with a revolutionary leadership. And that workers should emulate their example in order to be free of the exploitation and oppression we live with under capitalism," Britton said. "One of these strikers has applied to participate in the brigade."

Six people from western New England have joined the brigade. The Greater Hartford Cuba Coalition organized an Aug. 15 fundraising picnic to help cover airfare and other expenses. "A few years ago a friend of mine went to Cuba and said I must go and see for myself," Pat Fontes, who has been active in anti-war and social justice fights for 40 years, told those at the event. "I want to see how they are building a socialist society."

So far \$427 has been raised, nearly half the Coalition's goal of \$1,000.

The Che brigade is being organized

by the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP). It is named for Ernesto Che Guevara, a central leader of the Cuban Revolution and of efforts to aid workers and farmers worldwide to follow its example. Che fell in combat 50 years ago helping to lead a guerrilla struggle against the military dictatorship of René Barrientos in Bolivia.

Some 20,000 delegates from over 120 countries are expected at the World Festival of Youth and Students in Russia. One hundred have signed up to go from the U.S. The festival provides an opportunity for anti-imperialist fighters to meet each other, share experiences and discuss and debate how to advance social struggles worldwide.

Those who join the Che brigade or the World Festival in Sochi will have the opportunity to organize report-back meetings to share what they've learned.

To sign up for the brigade, contact the Chicago Cuba Coalition at (312) 952-2618 or ICanGoToCuba@gmail.com.

SWP: ‘Take nuclear weapons out of hands of US rulers!’

BY SETH GALINSKY

The imperialist rulers in Washington — the only government to ever use nuclear weapons — dropped a uranium bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, 72 years ago on Aug. 6, 1945. Liberal Democratic President Harry Truman ordered U.S. forces to drop a plutonium bomb on Nagasaki three days later.

Truman claimed Hiroshima was a military base. This was a lie. The city had a population of some 300,000 civilians, dwarfing the 43,000 soldiers stationed there. Nagasaki was home to more than 250,000 civilians and only 9,000 soldiers.

Ever since, the Socialist Workers Party has fought to take nuclear weapons out of the hands of U.S. imperialism and for Washington’s unilateral nuclear disarmament.

Some 110,000 people were killed almost instantly in the two bombings. As a result of radiation poisoning and other horrifying injuries, within five years the toll had risen to 340,000 — two-thirds of the population of Hiroshima and half of Nagasaki.

The decision to drop the bombs was a cold-blooded decision by the U.S. rulers. Looking to strengthen Washington’s grip on markets and resources worldwide, they wanted to make sure that Tokyo surrendered to Washington and not to Moscow. Russian troops were about to launch a major offensive against Japanese forces in Manchuria.

More importantly the U.S. rulers wanted to send a message to the workers of the world that U.S. imperialism stands ready to wipe out entire cities and annihilate hundreds of thousands of men, women and children to maintain their empire.

The slaughter in Hiroshima and Nagasaki sparked working-class fighters in the U.S. to put the demand for Washington’s unilateral disarmament on their banner ever since.

The U.S. rulers justified their attacks as necessary to defeat fascism, win peace and “save American lives.”

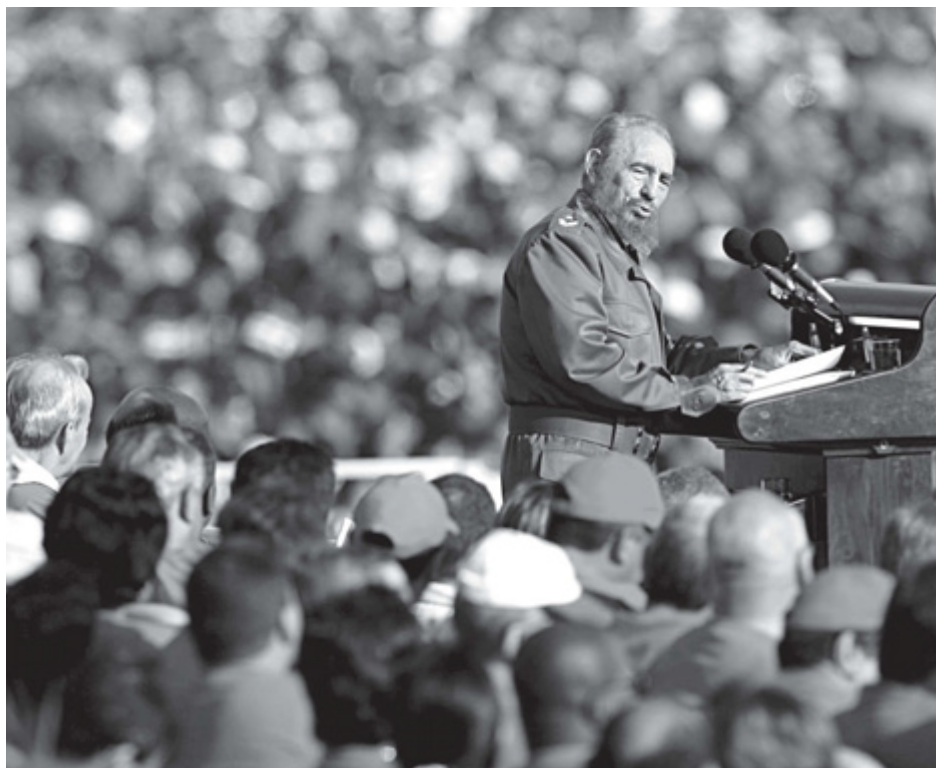
The *Militant* told the truth in its Aug. 18, 1945, banner headline: “There Is No Peace!”

Mutually Assured Destruction

“What a commentary on the real nature of capitalism in its decadent phase is this,” Socialist Workers Party leader James P. Cannon said in a speech two weeks after Washington’s obliteration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. “That the scientific conquest of the marvelous secret of atomic energy, which might rationally be used to lighten the burdens of all mankind, is employed first for the wholesale destruction of half a million people.”

In the aftermath of the second world imperialist slaughter, Moscow worked overtime to develop nuclear weapons, claiming they were necessary for protection against the U.S. rulers’ growing arsenal. Their race — increasingly joined by more governments — to amass nuclear weapons stockpiles has been a feature of world politics since.

Over the decades the rulers in Washington and their Stalinist counterparts in Moscow negotiated some “limits” on the quantity of nuclear warheads



Cuban President Fidel Castro addresses crowd at May Day celebration in Havana in 2006. Cuba’s revolutionary government calls for destruction of all nuclear weapons. “Our nuclear weapon is the invincible power of moral weapons,” Castro said at rally year before.

Reuters/Claudia Daut

they each possess, but they have made sure they maintained many times more bombs than needed to eliminate all life on the planet. Their framework has been to ensure that each side has sufficient nuclear weapons to maintain “deterrence” — which some called Mutually Assured Destruction or MAD — to avoid nuclear war.

As a result, today there are over 15,000 nuclear warheads, the vast majority in the hands of Washington and Moscow. The governments of Britain, France, China, India, Israel, North Korea and Pakistan are also now part of the nuclear “club.”

Fidel: We don’t need nukes

Revolutionary Cuba is one nation in the world that could claim the need for deterrence in the face of threats from U.S. imperialism. From the training and financing of counterrevolutionary guerrillas after the Jan. 1, 1959, overthrow of the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista to the Bay of Pigs invasion and the so-called October Missile Crisis today, the U.S. rulers have never stopped for one second their attempts to overturn the Cuban Revolution. And they have debated the use of their nuclear arsenal to do so.

But the communist leadership there, starting with Fidel Castro, has never sought to develop nuclear weapons. Instead, Cuba’s revolutionary government has consistently called for the destruction of *all* nuclear weapons.

“We have never considered the idea of fabricating nuclear weapons, because we don’t need them,” Fidel Castro said in 2005. “What sense would it make producing a nuclear weapon in the face of an enemy who has thousands of nuclear weapons? It would mean joining the game of nuclear confrontation.

“We possess a weapon as powerful as nuclear ones and it is the magnitude of the justice we are fighting for,” he said. “Our nuclear weapon is the invincible power of moral weapons.”

This stance is inextricably intertwined with the way the July 26 Movement and Rebel Army led by Castro won the revolutionary war against the Batista dictatorship. They never attacked civilians, never took hostages

and treated captured and wounded enemy soldiers with respect. They took power — and have held it against everything Washington could throw against them to this day — by waging a political battle to increase the consciousness, discipline, self-worth and fighting capacity of the island’s workers and farmers. Their moral standing and international solidarity has won support and inspired workers worldwide.

Does North Korea need ‘deterrence’?

Some defenders of the sovereignty of the people of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea say the government needs nuclear weapons to deter nuclear assault by Washington.

Putting forward similar arguments, many middle-class left groups have abandoned any perspective of fighting to eliminate nuclear weapons.

For class-conscious workers the key question is how to advance the interests of the working class worldwide. How to organize a revolutionary movement that can take power out of the hands of the capitalist warmakers.

North Korea has suffered tremendous destruction at the hands of U.S. imperialism, including millions killed and the almost total destruction of homes and factories during the U.S.-

led war against the Korean people from 1950 to 1953. Gen. Douglas MacArthur urged Washington to use nuclear weapons when China entered the war on the side of the North Korean forces.

It wasn’t nuclear “deterrence” that stayed U.S. imperialism’s hand — neither China nor North Korea had nuclear weapons at the time. The U.S. rulers feared the reaction of working people around the world and the spur it would give to independence and revolutionary struggles sweeping the colonial world.

Despite signing a cease-fire in 1953, Washington to this day refuses to sign a peace treaty with North Korea and organizes massive war “games” off their shore every year, including this year the deployment of one of their nuclear submarines.

Possessing nuclear weapons does not strengthen the defense of North Korea. It makes it harder to win working people around the world to oppose U.S. sanctions and threats.

No more Hiroshimas!

On July 7 the United Nations General Assembly passed a draft treaty calling for the elimination of nuclear weapons. But neither Washington nor any other government that possesses nukes deigned to even vote on the resolution.

The Japanese government also refused to vote for the treaty, sparking a controversy at this year’s 72nd annual commemoration of the bombing on Hiroshima, attended by 50,000 people. Kazumi Matsui, mayor of Hiroshima, saluted the governments that backed the treaty and said that now is the time “to advance further toward a nuclear weapon-free world.” But Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe defended his decision to not cast a vote on the treaty, arguing it was a “realistic approach.”

The Socialist Workers Party calls for total *unilateral* U.S. nuclear disarmament. Like Cuba’s revolutionary government, the SWP urges every government worldwide to do the same. The only way to ensure there are no more Hiroshimas is for the working class here to take political power out of the hands of the capitalist warmakers and join the fight for a socialist world.

RECOMMENDED READING ...

The Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

by James P. Cannon \$25
In *The Struggle for Socialism in the ‘American Century’*

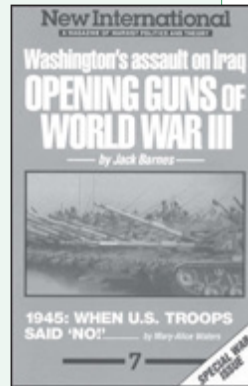
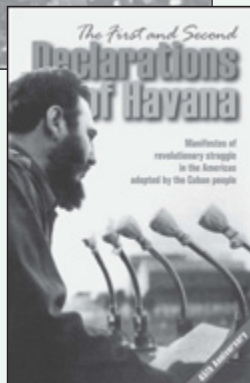
1945: When U.S. Troops Said ‘No!’

by Mary-Alice Waters \$14
In *New International* no. 7
Also in Spanish, French, Swedish

First and Second Declarations of Havana

Adopted by million-strong assemblies of Cuban people in 1960 and 1962. \$10
Also in Spanish, French, Greek, Farsi, Swedish

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1961 literacy drive key to advance of Cuban Revolution

The following excerpt is from Cuba and the Coming American Revolution by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. The French edition is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for August. This selection explains how the 1961 literacy campaign helped transform Cuba's workers and farmers in advancing their revolution, as well as the volunteers participating in this effort. Copyright © 2001 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JACK BARNES

In September 1960, addressing the United Nations General Assembly, Cuban prime minister Fidel Castro announced to the world: "In the coming year, our country intends to wage its great battle against illiteracy, with the ambitious goal of teaching every single illiterate person in the country" — one million Cubans, roughly one-third of the adult population — "to read and write." And that's exactly what they did, as some 100,000 young people, most of them teenagers, went to the countryside and lived and worked alongside peasant families.

Today we are celebrating the fortieth anniversary of that historic conquest.

On April 15, 1961, when the Yankee-



Literacy brigade volunteers join December 1961 "Rally of the Pencils" in Havana to celebrate helping almost 1 million peasants and workers learn to read and write. Literacy campaign gave them "access to cumulative conquests of millennia of human endeavor and opens door to workers and farmers to participate in every aspect of social and political life," said Jack Barnes.

organized mercenaries announced their imminent invasion by simultaneously bombing three Cuban airfields, the revolutionary government mobilized the people's militias and other military units. In the declaration announcing that state of alert, Fidel Castro called on all Cubans to "occupy their assigned posts, whether in a military unit or a workplace" — and he added, in the same sentence, "with no interruption in production, the literacy campaign, or a single revolutionary task."

Four days later, when the counter-revolutionary forces had been defeated, the communiqué signed by Fidel reporting that victory to the Cuban people was demonstratively dated: "April 19, 1961, Year of Education."

You can find both documents in the new Pathfinder book, *Playa Girón/Bay of Pigs: Washington's First Military Defeat in the Americas*, whose publication in English and Spanish we are also celebrating here today.

Nineteen sixty-one in Cuba was the Year of Education in all the meanings of that word — the capacity to learn, to produce, to become a more disciplined revolutionary soldier, to create, to develop. The Year of Education meant making culture more accessible. It meant bravery in serving the highest human

goals. It meant extending a hand of solidarity to anyone fighting against injustice and oppression anywhere in the world. It meant offering your life to achieve these goals.

Fidel Castro, Ernesto Che Guevara, and other leaders of the Cuban Revolution were very much aware that the greatest obstacle to the line of march of the toilers is the tendency, promoted and perpetuated by the exploiting classes, for working people to underestimate ourselves, to underestimate what we can accomplish, to doubt our own worth. That's why revolutionists in Cuba were so proud that the literacy effort had continued with minimal disruption as the battle against the invaders — a battle for the very life of the revolution — was fought and won. "The literacy campaign has not stopped even during these days," announced Fidel Castro in his April 23 report on the victory to the Cuban people.

Whatever any particular individual was doing over those three days, April 17–19 — whether deployed at the front, working in the fields or factories, or helping someone learn to read and write — the Cuban people felt the bond of a common battle waged by equals. A common bond that provided a basis for discipline, a basis for the shared joy of

construction, the joy of creation, and the joy of victory in battle over those who sought to destroy everything their revolution was making possible.

What a moment for the people of Cuba to announce to the world the socialist character of the revolution!

A little more than a year later, Che Guevara told the congress of the Union of Young Communists (UJC) — in a speech you can find in Pathfinder's *Che Guevara Talks to Young People* — that young communists had the responsibility to be "the first in work, the first in study, the first in defense of the country." And he congratulated them for the three words they had put on the emblem of their organization — study, work, and rifle.

These are the emblems of all Cubans, Che said, permanent emblems, not just momentary ones.

The rifle, because no progress toward the liberation of toiling humanity is secure unless the exploiting classes know we are ready to defend those gains by any means necessary. That was the truth confirmed once again at Playa Girón and soon retested and reconfirmed during the October 1962 "Missile" Crisis.

Work, often depicted by a shovel or a machete, because the transformation of nature by human labor, social labor, is not only the source of all wealth but the foundation for all culture. Without the shovel and machete, there's nothing for the rifle to defend.

And study, depicted by a pencil, a symbol of the literacy campaign, because the capacity to read and write gives access to the cumulative conquests of millennia of human endeavor and opens the doors to workers and farmers to participate as equals in every aspect of social and political life. It makes them better able to transform production and the conditions of life and work, better able to take control of their own destiny.

The literacy campaign was central to strengthening the worker-peasant alliance on which revolutionary Cuba was founded; it was central to narrowing the gulf between toilers in city and countryside. Peasants and their families in prerevolutionary Cuba had virtually no educational opportunities. This was especially true for women in rural areas. So the literacy campaign struck a mighty blow for the emancipation of women, too.

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August

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The Militant August 28, 2017

SWP protests rightist acts, killing in Charlottesville

Continued from page 2

alt-right group, got pushed to the ground in the commotion. Someone raised a stick over his head and beat the man with it, and that's when I screamed and ran over with several other strangers to help him to his feet."

Later she joined a group shouting, "Get out of our town!" at the rightists as they marched by. "A woman from their line turned to me, looked me dead in the eye and said, 'I hope you get raped by a n----r.'"

Shortly afterwards, neo-Nazi James Alex Fields Jr. used his car to kill Heather Heyer, a member of the Industrial Workers of the World, and wound 19 others. Fields was arrested and has been charged with murder.

Liberals blame workers who elected Trump

The meritocratic liberals and leftists lay the blame for what had happened on President Trump and workers who voted for him. An Aug. 12 column by Colbert King in the *Washington Post* was headlined, "These Are Your People, President Trump," one of many variants in the liberal media that racist and rightist groups are his "base."

"We have a bigoted billionaire-cum-president who has done precious little for the white working class whose resentment fueled his rise," wrote Michael Dyson in the Aug. 12 *New York Times*. "The only remnant of this leadership they have to hold on to is the folklore of white nationalist sentiment, and xenophobic passion, that offer them psychic comfort if little financial stability."

Workers World Party takes this distorted view to a further extreme.

"Media manipulation and financial maneuvering by a significant far-rightwing section of the billionaire class to get one of their own into the White House," they said in a public statement, "has emboldened the most racist, anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim, anti-Semitic, misogynist, male supremacist, murderous scum of this decaying capitalist society."

But it's simply not true that there is a rise in racism or anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim sentiment among the working class in the U.S.

On the contrary, there is less racism, bigotry or sexism among workers in the U.S. today than at any time in U.S. history. The historic conquests of the Black rights movement of the 1950s, '60s and early '70s dealt a crushing blow to Jim Crow segregation, pushed back racism and changed the United States forever.

President Trump wasn't elected by racist southern workers seething over statues of Robert E. Lee coming

down. He was elected by workers in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, Michigan and other so-called Rust Belt regions who voted for Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012, seeking change in the midst of social disaster raining down on them from the crisis of capitalism. In 2016, they rallied to Trump, his pledge to "drain the swamp" in Washington, his disdain for the "politically correct," and his promise to stand by the working class. Did those who backed Obama suddenly become racists?

The meritocratic pundits insist Trump gives succor to the ultraright. "Trump Gives White Supremacists an Unequivocal Boost," ran one headline in the Aug. 15 *Times*.

After the armed clashes by some on both sides of the protests, Trump condemned "in the strongest possible terms this egregious display of hatred, bigotry, and violence on many sides." The White House supplemented this shortly after, saying, "of course that includes white supremacists, KKK, neo-Nazi and all extremist groups."

Nonetheless, article after article, op-ed after op-ed, the *Times*, *Post*, anti-Trump politicians of both parties and others insist he's hooked up with reactionaries of all stripes. When Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham in a news release said that Trump hadn't been forthright enough in condemning the racists in Charlottesville, the president responded.

"Publicity seeking Lindsey Graham falsely stated that I said there is moral equivalency between the KKK, neo-Nazis & white supremacists and people like Heyer," Trump wrote on Twitter Aug. 17. "Such a disgusting lie."

The relentless attacks on Trump are not because he is a threat to capitalist rule. He's a billionaire capitalist real estate baron, who aims to defend the interests of his class. It's because the meritocratic liberals see in the workers who elected him class battles to come.

Looking at things through the lens of bringing Trump down, the latest heroes of the left are the billionaire CEOs and investment bankers who stepped down from the White House business round table.

Antifa danger to working class

Some of the groups involved in the counterprotest presented a course of action that combines reckless bravado with scorn for the working class.

The *New York Times* ran a photo of a number of armed members of a group called Redneck Revolt at the counterprotest.

The group put out a "Call to Arms for Charlottesville" that concluded, "To the fascists and all who

stand with them, we'll be seeing you in Virginia." They assert that "letting fascists organize publicly and without challenge is the same as standing guard while they build a bomb."

The idea that small radical groups can smash racism and fascism in the egg by physically confronting them is not new. But it is dangerous to the fight against racist violence and to the working class.

The only way to confront their poison is to mobilize the working class. The strategy of antifa, Redneck Revolt and the like tries to substitute for the working class, a recipe for disaster. Not only does it turn working people into spectators instead of active participants in their own liberation, it gives the government and cops a handle for assaults on political rights crucial for the working class to discuss, debate and act.

Adventurism is a deadly trap for the workers movement. Maybe this time the cops were "outgunned," but you can be sure they won't be in the future.

In fact, the biggest danger to the political rights of the working class in the U.S. today is not from small groups of white supremacists or fascists. As Charlottesville shows, they were incapable of mobilizing more than a few hundred people. Their racist, anti-working-class views and thuggery have virtually no support among working people.

Instead, the danger to workers' rights comes from liberals and middle-class radicals who call for armed combat with reactionaries today. And those whose efforts to shut down meetings on college campuses across the country — from Berkeley, California; to Olympia, Washington; to Burlington, Vermont — have given college administrations and cops a golden opportunity. They call for tossing rights won by the working class at great cost out the window.

In an Aug. 17 column in the *Times*, K-Sue Park, a Critical Race Studies fellow at the UCLA School of Law, excoriates the ACLU for challenging the ban on the rightist rally in Charlottesville.

'We replaced you'

Thousands of people, including many students, upset with the white supremacist rallies, the killing of Heyer and the ultraleft forays, turned out for a candlelight vigil at the University of Virginia campus Aug. 16, organized by word of mouth. It was many times larger than any of the actions of the previous days.

They retraced the steps of the march where the white supremacists chanted "Jews will not replace us." One participant posted a photo of the vigil with the caption: "We replaced you."

EDITORIAL

No coal miner has to die!

The following statement was released Aug. 17 by Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York.

With increased international demand coal production is going up for the first time in years. And so are the deaths of miners on the job. Dog-eat-dog capitalism and its profit-driven coal bosses are to blame. No miner has to die!

So far this year 11 miners have been killed in the U.S., already more than in all of 2016. The majority have lost their lives in the eastern coalfields, where falling demand and higher production costs led to bankruptcies and mine closures. The mine bosses are opening new mines, more and more of them non-union. In their drive for profit, they push speedup and cut corners on safety. The result is death, injury and an explosion in the scourge of black lung disease.

Those killed include a number of miners — both experienced and inexperienced — working in new mines. Coal giants like Peabody Energy and Arch Coal that went bankrupt, seeking to get the union off their back, have restructured and reopened mines.

The response of Washington's Mine Safety and Health Administration to the body count is to send inspectors to review training programs and observe young miners on the job, while promising the coal bosses they won't report safety violations they see.

United Mine Workers of America representatives aren't required to accompany inspectors in union mines! But it's only miners through their unions who can and will fight for safety.

Worldwide the capitalist system is in a deepening, long-term crisis of production and trade. The capitalist rulers are trying to boost their profits on our backs. They push fewer workers to produce more in a shorter period of time for less pay and benefits. It's not just in coal. Workers face dangerous conditions in rail, meatpacking, construction and other industries across the board.

To roll back the death toll we have to organize, unionize and fight together for workers control of safety on the job — including the right to stop work whenever we face unsafe conditions. It's a life and death question.

By organizing and fighting for workers control, we will gain the experience, class consciousness and confidence to fight to overturn the dictatorship of capital and replace the political power of the propertied rulers with workers power. We need to reorganize production to satisfy human needs, not private profit, as Cuba's revolutionary workers and farmers did nearly 60 years ago.

This is the road toward a society where no coal miner or any worker has to die on the job.

This is the goal of the Socialist Workers Party. Join us in this struggle!

Recommended reading

TEAMSTER POLITICS

"Unionism and politics cannot be separated. Power generated at the trade-union level can be shattered by government blows. Workers must enter the political arena as an independent class force, with their own party."

— Farrell Dobbs

Coal Miners ON STRIKE

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Counter-mobilization A Strategy to Fight Racist and Fascist Attacks

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